

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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## ***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA***

***San Diego, California***

***United States Attorney  
Karen P. Hewitt***

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***For Immediate Release***

### **NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY** - October 30, 2007

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that a federal jury in San Diego has found Abderahman Ben Khemis Dhaoui and Julie Ann Robicheaux guilty of one count of conspiracy to commit immigration fraud and seven counts of making false statements on immigration applications. The jury also convicted Dhaoui of four counts of making false statements relating to his application to become a naturalized U.S. citizen and one count of unlawful procurement of naturalization. The charges relate to immigration applications that were filed on behalf of Dhaoui to allow him to immigrate to the United States, as well as a naturalization application leading him to become a naturalized U.S. citizen in June 2003.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Alessandra P. Serano, who prosecuted the case, the evidence at trial established that Dhaoui and Robicheaux committed fraud on the former United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) when both defendants filed various immigration applications permitting Dhaoui to remain in the United States as a lawful permanent resident as a spouse of a United States citizen. The evidence at trial showed, that based upon Dhaoui's marriage to Robicheaux, Dhaoui was able to "fast track" his naturalization application in only three years, instead of the standard five years. The evidence

further established that Dhaoui made to Robicheaux regular payments totaling more than \$11,000 over the course of the marriage. However, the payments stopped days before Dhaoui became a United States citizen.

According to court documents, Dhaoui, who was born in Tunisia, married Robicheaux, a United States citizen by birth, in Tunisia in May 1999, after they met over an internet chat line. Within two years of being married, Dhaoui moved out of the marital residence and resided apart from Robicheaux. However, this information was never disclosed to the former INS officials.

The evidence also revealed that Dhaoui initiated divorce proceedings against Robicheaux in August 2003, within two months of Dhaoui's becoming a naturalized citizen. In December 2003, Dhaoui married a Tunisian woman, half Robicheaux's age, and helped immigrate her to the United States. In November 2004, Robicheaux married a Moroccan man, younger than Dhaoui, and helped immigrate him to the United States in December 2004.

Sentencing for both defendants is scheduled before United States District Judge John A. Houston on January 28, 2008, at 10:30 a.m.

**DEFENDANTS**

**Case Number: 05cr2167-JAH**

ABDERRAHMAN BEN KHEMIS DHAOUI

JULIE ANN ROBICHEAUX

**SUMMARY OF CHARGES**

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1546 (False Statements on Immigration Applications)  
Maximum Penalty: 10 years' incarceration, \$250,000 fine, and up to three years on supervised release

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1015(a) (False Statements related to naturalization)  
Maximum Penalty: 5 years' incarceration, \$250,000 fine, and up to three years on supervised release

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1425(a) (Unlawful Procurement of Naturalization)  
Maximum Penalty: 10 years' incarceration, \$250,000 fine, and up to three years on supervised release and automatic revocation of naturalization.

**AGENCIES**

Immigration and Customs Enforcement  
Federal Bureau of Investigation